

Appln. No. 10/782,116
Amendment dated February 15, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 15, 2005

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 through 15 remain in this application. No claims have been cancelled or withdrawn. Claims 16 and 17 have been added.

The Examiner's rejections will be considered in the order of their occurrence in the Office Action.

Part 1 of the Office Action

Claim 2 has been objected to for the informalities noted in the Office Action.

Claim 2 has been amended in a manner believed to clarify its dependency.

Withdrawal of the objection to claim 2 is therefore respectfully requested.

Parts 2 through 4 of the Office Action

Claims 1, 2, 5, 13 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Parrish.

Claims 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parrish in view of Piscotti.

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parrish in view of Johnson.

Claim 1, particularly as amended, requires "at least two connection openings formed through said panel, a first one of the at least two connection openings being positioned on an opposite side of the receiver hitch from a second one of the at least two connection openings for permitting positioning the first of the at least two connection openings

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above the receiver hitch and the second of the at least two connection openings below the receiver hitch when the assembly is mounted on the wall", which is a relationship which is shown in the drawings of the application. This relationship is completely foreign to the Parrish patent application.

Further, claim 7 as amended requires "wherein said securing means for each said receiver hitch of said at least two spaced receiver hitches comprises a pair of axially-aligned holes extending through opposite sides of said receiver hitch" and "wherein said opposite sides of a first one of said at least two receiver hitches are oriented substantially parallel to said opposite sides of a second one of said at least two spaced receiver hitches such that said opposites sides of said receiver hitches are not oriented toward each other". This relationship, which is also shown in the drawings, is also not shown in the Parrish patent application.

It is asserted in the Office Action, with respect to claims 7 through 12 and 15

In regard to claims 7-12 and 15, the examiner takes official notice that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include a plurality of the hitch devices as set forth in the above rejections. Claims 7-12 and 15 differ from claims 1-6 and 14 only by way of the recitation of claim 7, "A hitch device storage assembly for storing a *plurality of hitch devices.. a plurality of spaced receiver hitches...*" The claim of using a plurality of devices does not carry patentable weight over the prior art rejections advanced above in light of the fact that it is well known and obvious to use more than one of said devices depending on the number of hitch devices one wishes to store. The inclusion of a plurality of devices does not bring any non-obvious or original merit to the claims.

However, it is submitted that, not only does the Parrish published patent application not show this relationship, it is also not merely a duplication of parts shown in the Parrish patent application.

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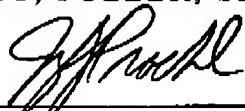
Withdrawal of the §102(b) and §103(a) rejections of claims 1 through 15 is therefore respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, early reconsideration and allowance of this application are most courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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